AKIRA 31™

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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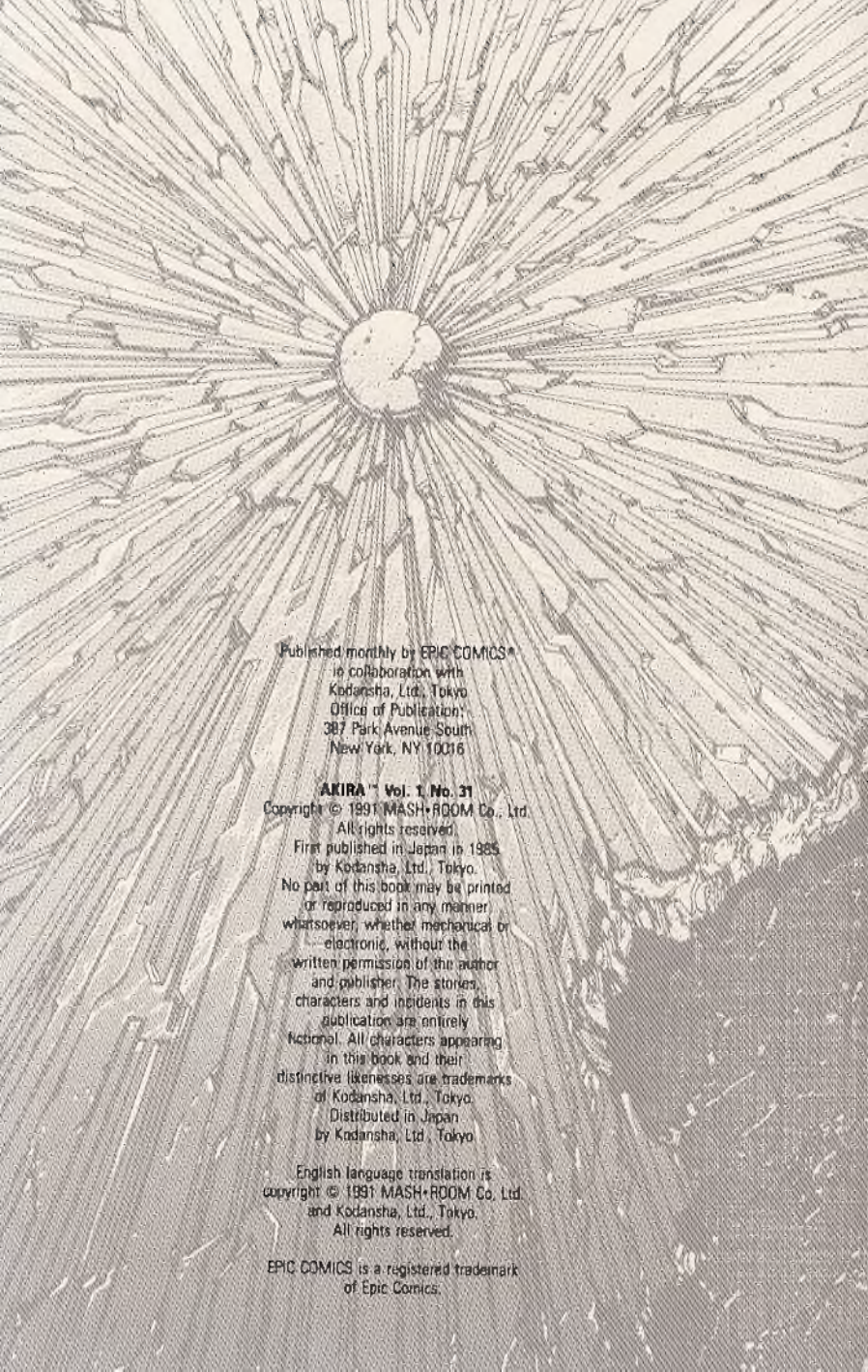

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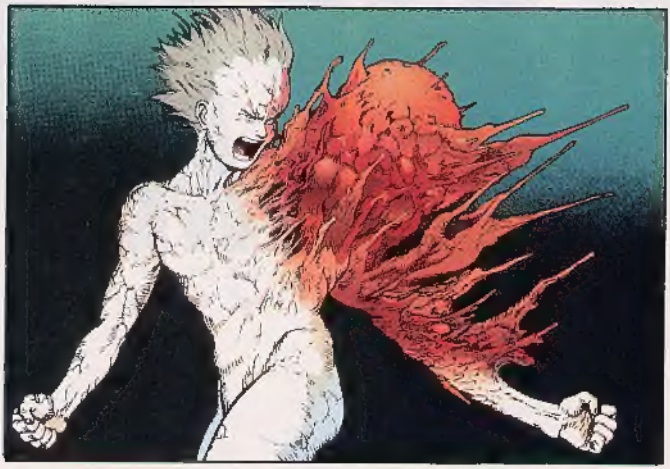


AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 31

STADIUM SHOW

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

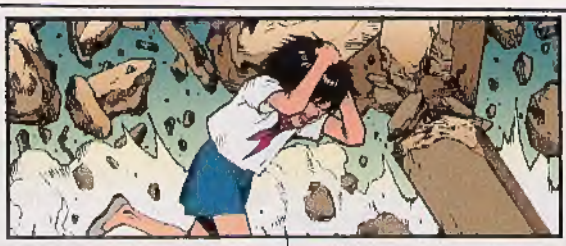
2030. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, one-time leader of a delinquent gang, is caught up in the aftermath of a power struggle between a Japanese military research organization—led by a man known only as the **Colonel**—and a resistance group whose members included **Kay, Ryu,** and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko.**

Under his control, the **Colonel** had a number of psychic children, each identified by a number tattooed on the hand. Among them were **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**—Numbers 25 and 27—and the blind **Lady Miyako**—Number 19—was once among their ranks but now heads a great religious cult. Number 41 is **Tetsuo,** once Kaneda's friend, but now his greatest enemy. **Tetsuo** lost his left arm to a laser blast from the military satellite-weapon SOL, and has used cybernetics and telekinesis to fabricate for himself a prosthetic replacement.

Most powerful of all the children is Number 28—**Akira**—a docile and enigmatic boy who was placed in a cryogenic sleep forty years ago after he inadvertently started the Third World War with a mental blast. He was recently reawakened by the jealous and ambitious **Tetsuo.** Shortly thereafter, he responded to emotional trauma by again devastating the reconstructed city of Neo-Tokyo. Japan now exists in a state of emergency. The forces of the army and the resistance are scattered.

In the western part of Neo-Tokyo, the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units to defend their land. To increase the Empire's power, **Tetsuo** uses drugs and training to develop psychic abilities in some of their subjects. Most faithful among their numerous followers are Tetsuo's girlfriend, **Kaori**, and his dapper, ambitious assistant. Their headquarters are Neo-Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. To the East, **Lady**

Kaori | The Colonel | Lt. Yamada | Joker

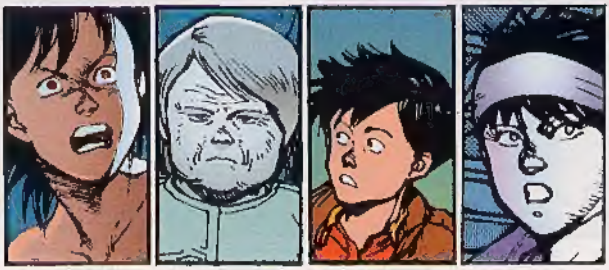


Miyako welcomes refugees, including **Kay** and **Chiyoko,** to her shrine. She is aided by **Kiyoko, Masaru** and a number of loyal, psychically gifted monks.

The Empire is infiltrated by teams of spies from the outside world, but all of them except **Lieutenant Yamada**—who takes temporary shelter with **Ryu**—are killed. **Ryu** wants to join **Yamada**, until he learns that the spy plans to assassinate **Akira**, even if it means taking innocent lives. After that he keeps an eye on **Yamada**, trying to protect both the invader and the people of Neo-Tokyo. **Yamada** and his men meet one of Tetsuo's trained psychics — the **Hozuki** man. To their dismay, they find that he can withstand gunfire . . . and kill without touching.

The wounded **Colonel** is living in hiding with one of his scientists. He is determined to kill **Tetsuo**, who he believes could become another **Akira**. However, military forces outside Neo-Tokyo are trying to wrestle computer control of SOL from him.

Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists is studying the **Akira** phenomenon — which they have codenamed **Juvenile A**. They are aghast to learn that the world's armies have amassed an **Akira Assassination Corps**, despite their recommendations. They are even more upset by the knowledge that the young, dedicated soldiers are sure to be slaughtered by the inconceivable might of their enemy. One of the scientists — **Stanley Simmons** — leaves the ship without authorization, hoping desperately to implement a secret plan. Meanwhile, **Lady Miyako, Masaru** and **Kiyoko** try to convince **Kay** to join them in battle against **Tetsuo**, because although **Kay** lacks native psychic abilities, she is



Tetsuo Masaru Kai Kay

a powerful medium, through whom the others could project their powers and strike as one. **Lady Miyako** explains that **Akira**'s personality has been destroyed by his power, leaving him a passive vessel, and that when **Tetsuo**'s character is likewise eroded, he too will be beyond control. **Kay** agrees, remembering that, on a whim, **Tetsuo** recently destroyed part of the moon and set off geological cataclysms.

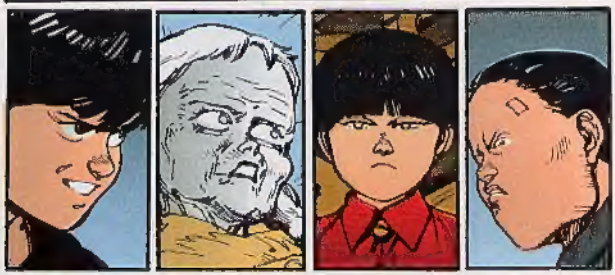
Kaneda, who's teamed up with **Kai** and **Joker** — a former rival from his gang days—is outraged to learn of the risk **Kay** is taking. He vows to kill **Tetsuo** himself rather than let her face such danger. Then, at long last, he kisses **Kay** and promises her that they'll spend the night together when they next meet. **Kaneda, Kai** and **Joker** formulate an attack strategy involving most of their men, as well as such state-of-the-art weapons as they've salvaged, including laser rifles, flying platforms, and one caretaker robot. Together, they head for the **Olympic Stadium**.

Following his huge expenditure of power, **Tetsuo** begins to lose control, and his artificial arm assumes a grossly mutated form. He runs amok, killing any of his followers who come too close, until **Kaori** is able to calm him. After a brief encounter with the **Colonel, Tetsuo** again teleports to the ship, where **Karma Tangi**—a wise and sensitive monk — warns him that his power has grown beyond what his body can contain and that it is now trying to absorb its very surroundings.

A pitched battle between **Tetsuo** and the **Navy** ensues. The ship's **Admiral** — who witnessed **Tetsuo**'s encounter with **Karma Tangi** and the scientists — is the only fighting man capable of understanding their enemy's nature. **Tetsuo** seizes control of bombs and planes, using his attacker's weapons against them.

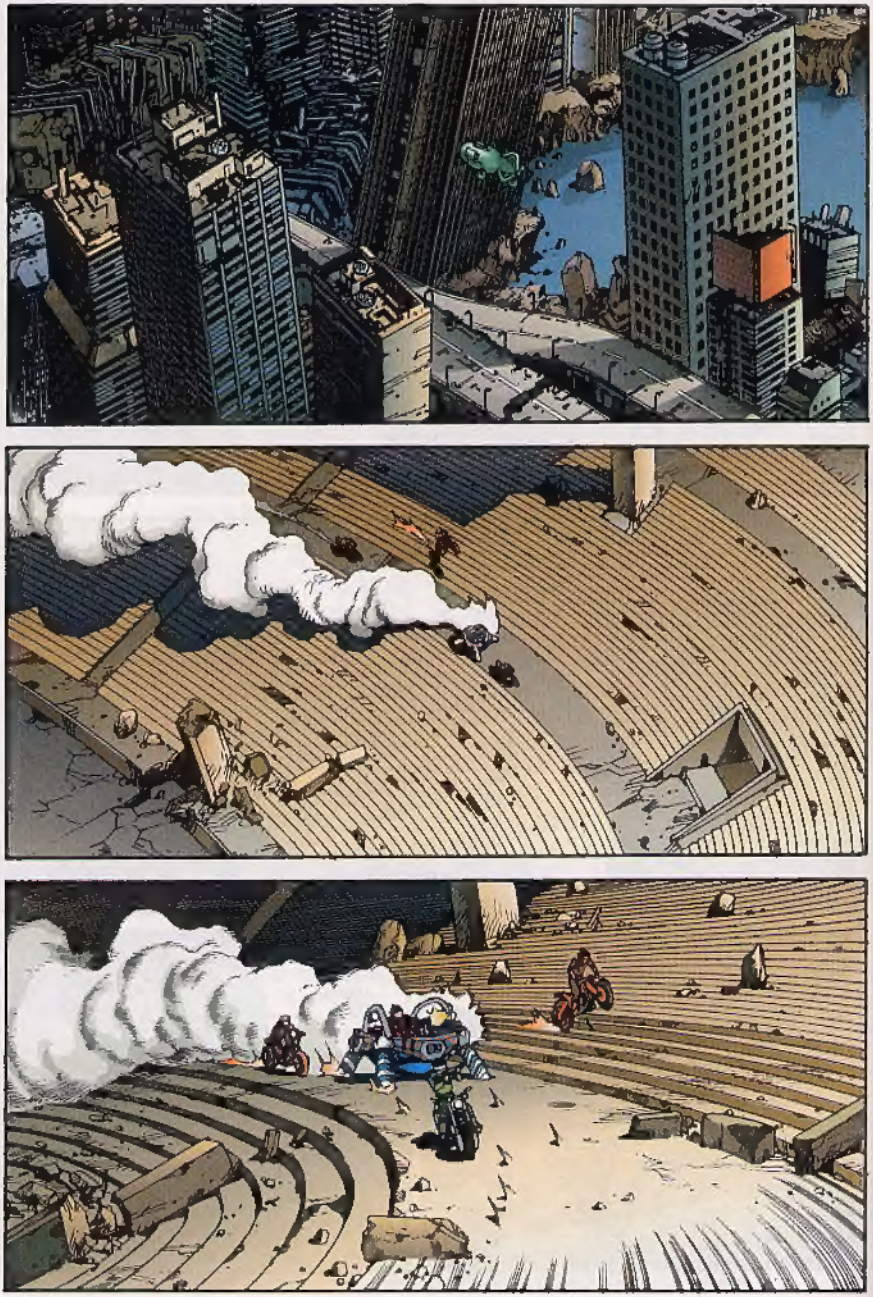
Kay, channeling the powers of **Lady Miyako** and the numbered children, attacks **Tetsuo**, distracting him. Then, before he can kill her, she teleports safely back to the shrine. **Tetsuo**, collapses in pain, overcome by his power's hunger.

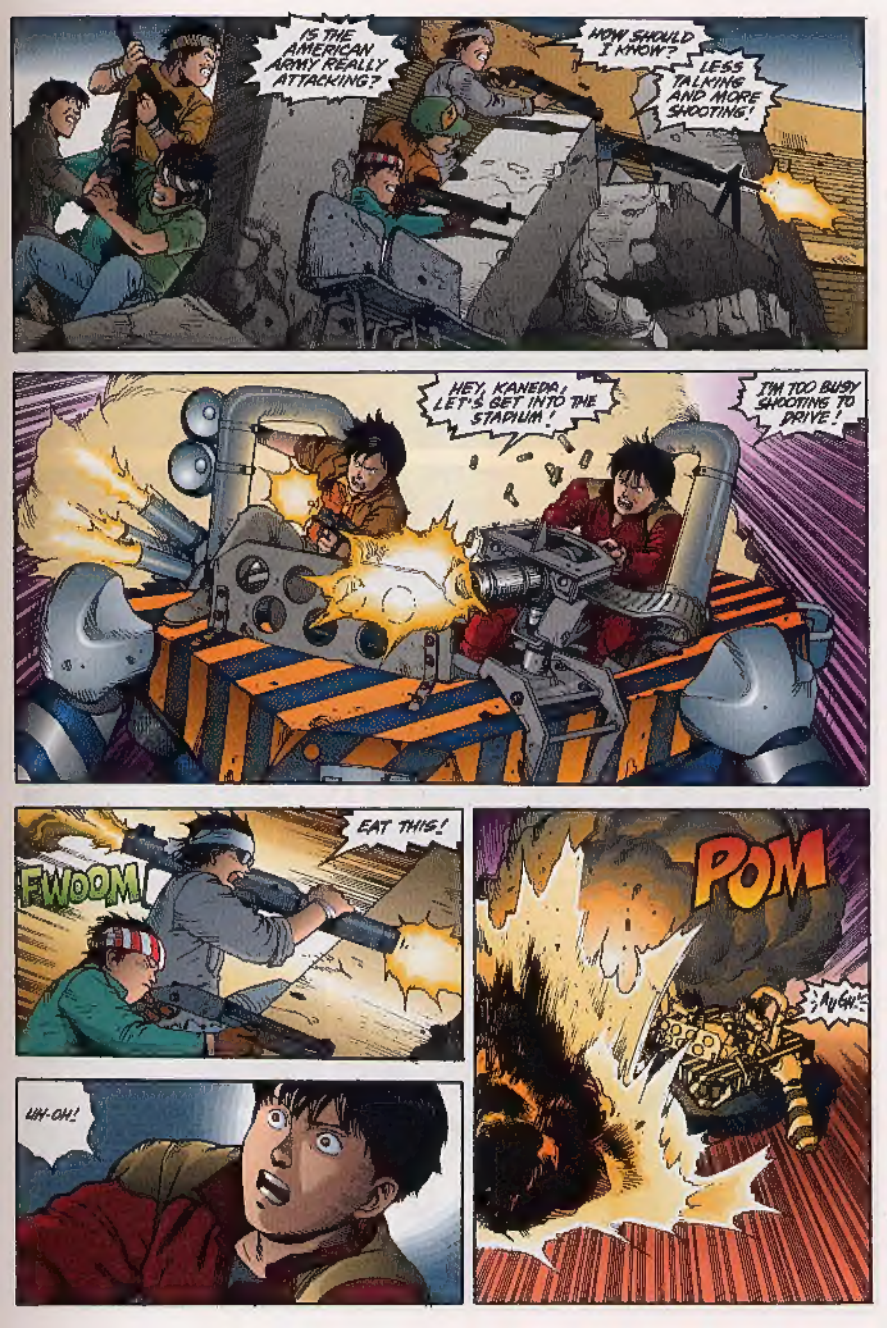
Then, as **Tetsuo**'s assistant broods about the future and potential ruin of all his schemes, **Akira** awakes.



Kaneda **Kiyoko** **Akira** **Chiyoko**

I'VE DRIFTED INTO THE WESTERN SECTOR. NOW...
... TO FIND A LANDING SITE.

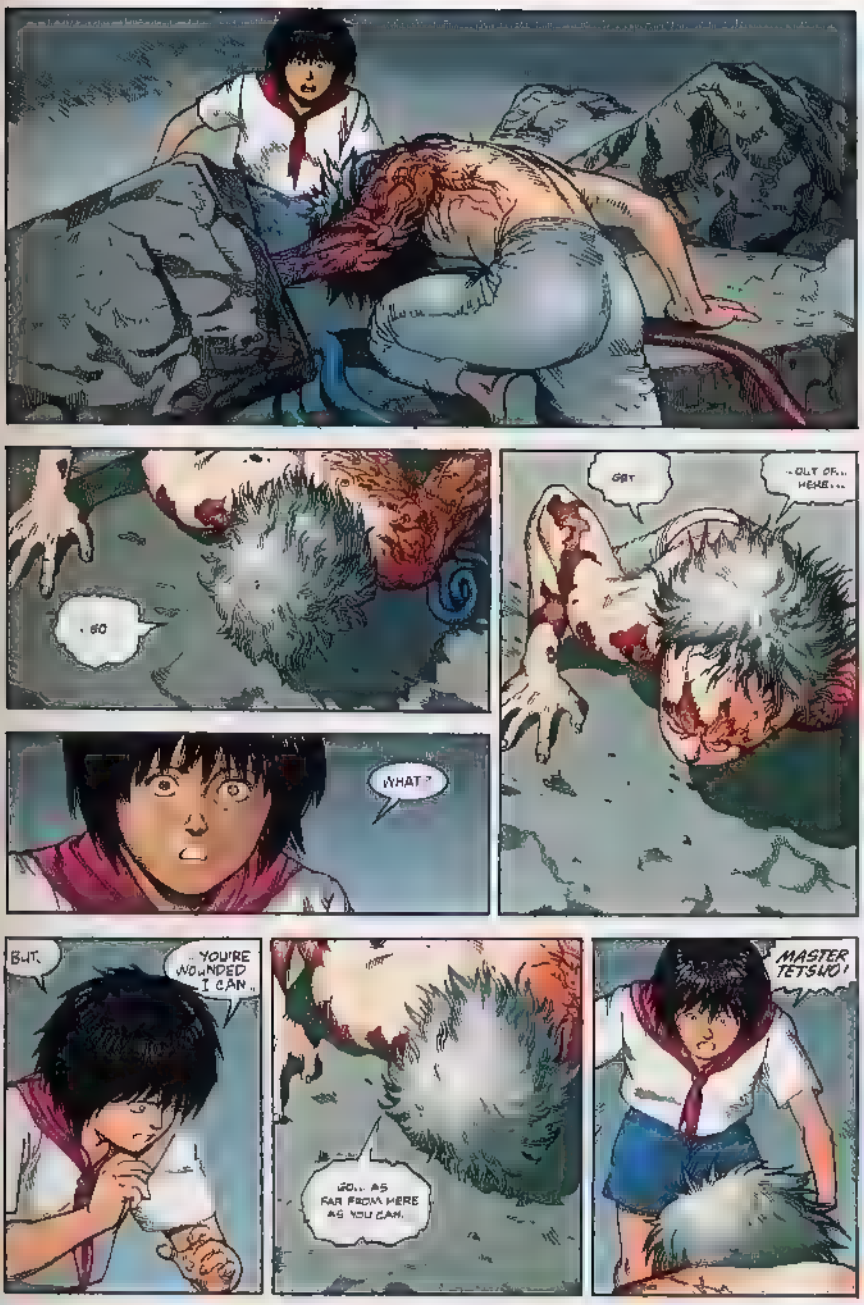


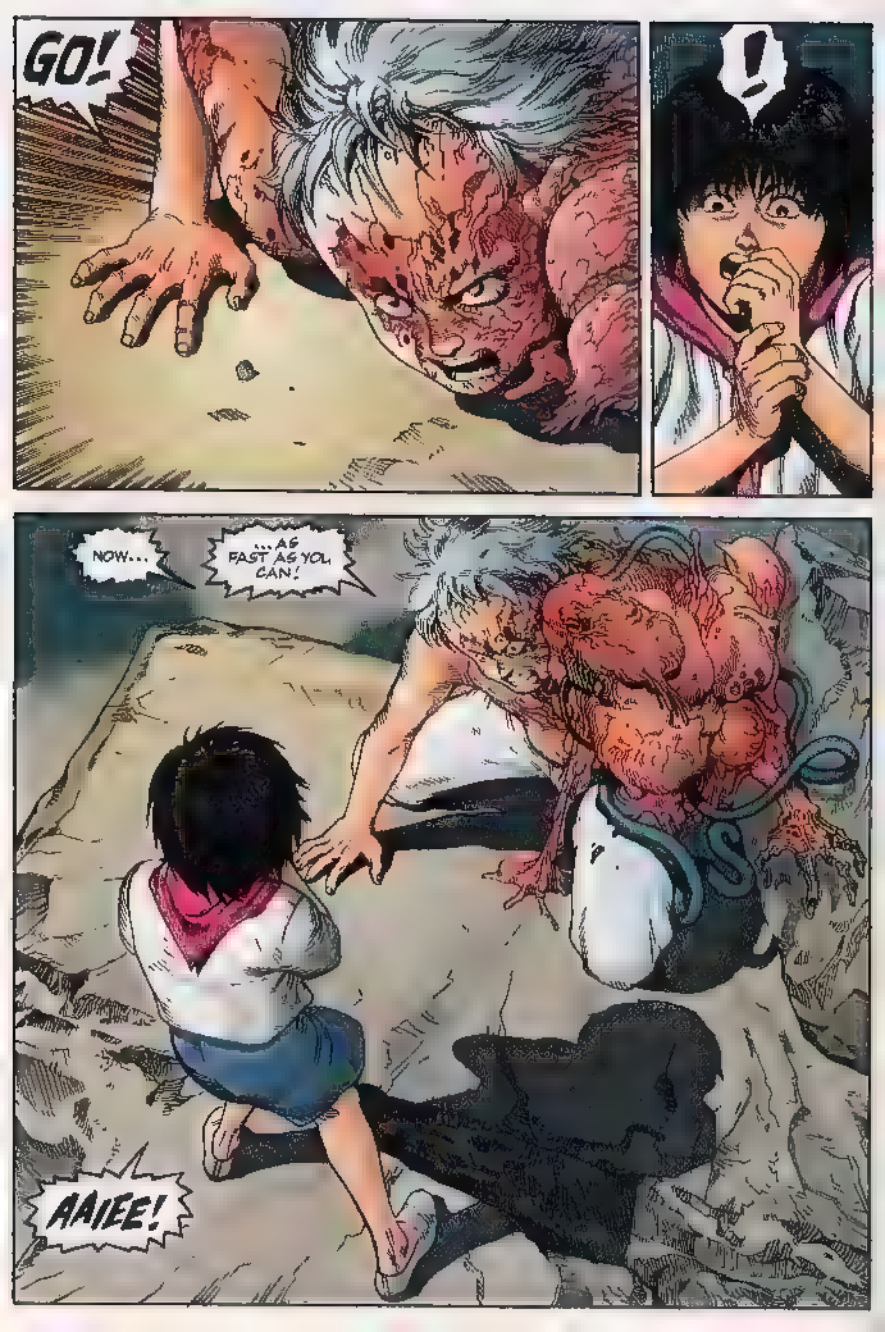

IS THE AMERICAN ARMY REALLY ATTACKING?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
LESS TALKING AND MORE SHOOTING!
HEY, KANEDA! LET'S GET INTO THE STADIUM!
I'M TOO BUSY SHOOTING TO DRIVE!
EAT THIS!
FWOOM
POM
AUGH!
UH-OH!

GONGONG
HUNH?
WHAT..?
NOW!
TAK
EH..?
BANG
YEEK!

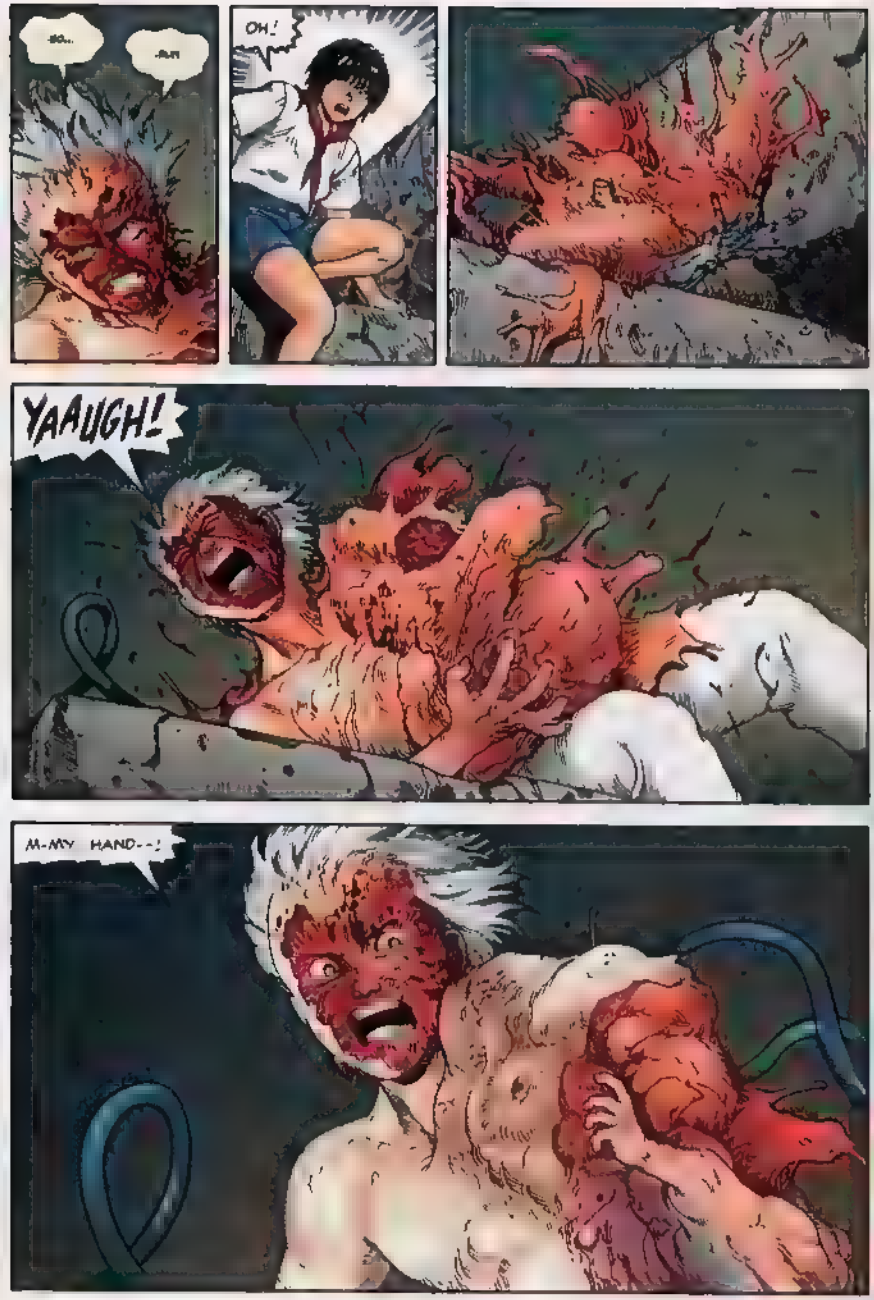
POK
THUD
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
...FREAK...

DID WE STOP IT?
BHOOM!
IT'S ALIVE!!
RRRRN
CHAAPARGE!
TOM TOM TOM


...GO
...OLY OF.. HERE...
GET
¡WHAT?
BUT.
...YOU'RE WOUNDED I CAN..
GO... AS FAR FROM HERE AS YOU CAN.
MASTER TETSUO!


GO!
!
NOW...
...AS FAST AS YOU CAN!
AAIEE!

AAARGH!
SHRRRP
PLOP
¿UHH?
¿UHH?
¿UHH?

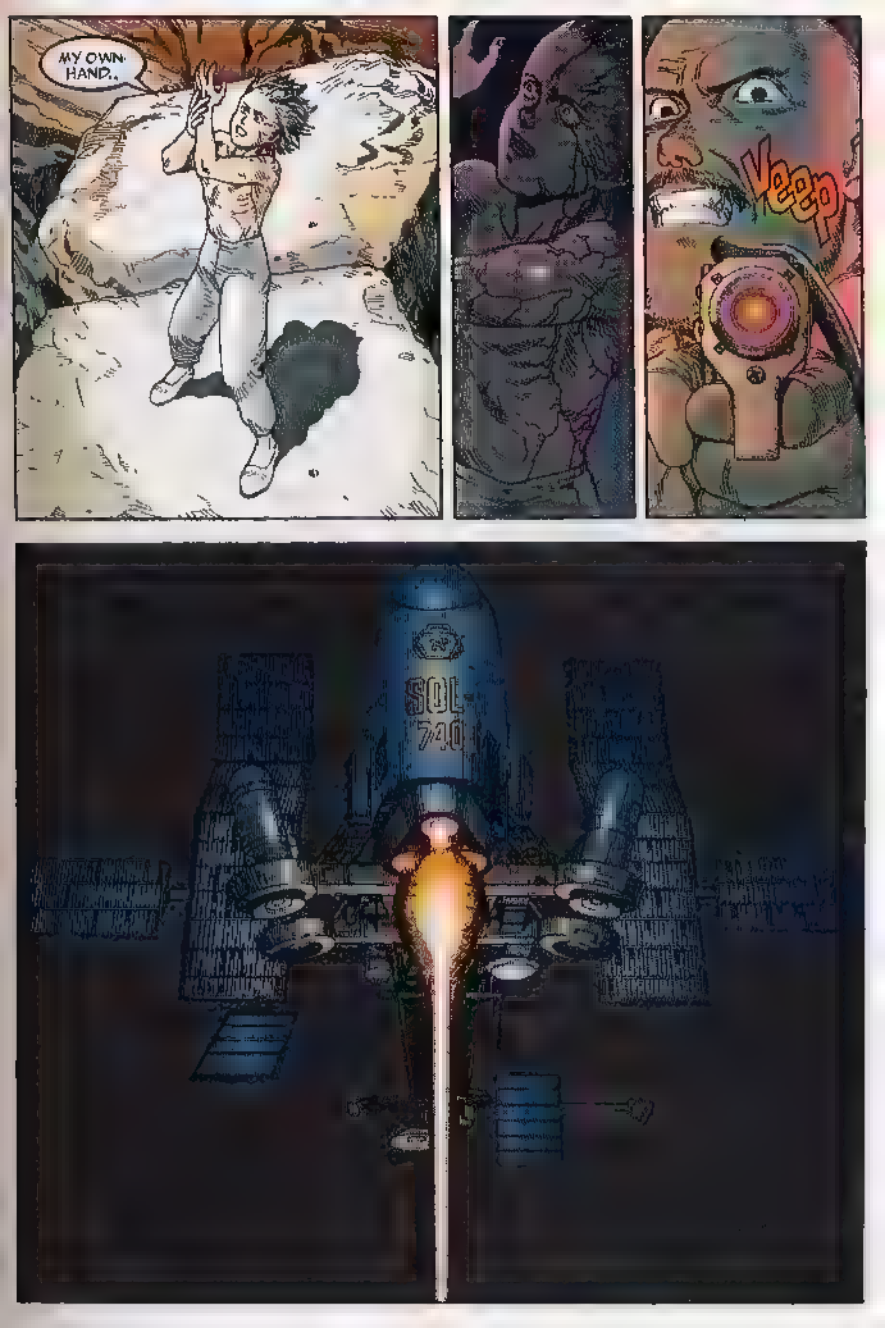

OH!
YAAUGH!
M-MY HAND--!

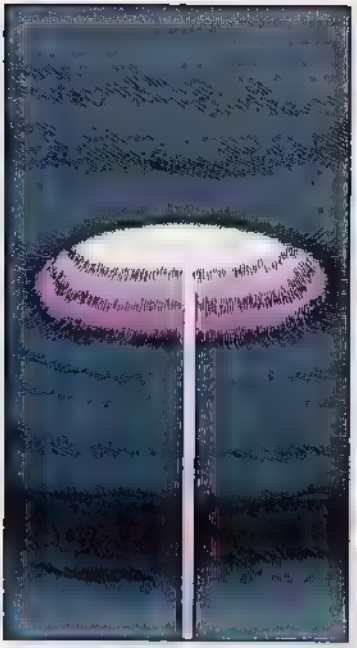
AAAARGH!
OH!
KRAK
RRUMMBLE
YEEEK!
KRASH

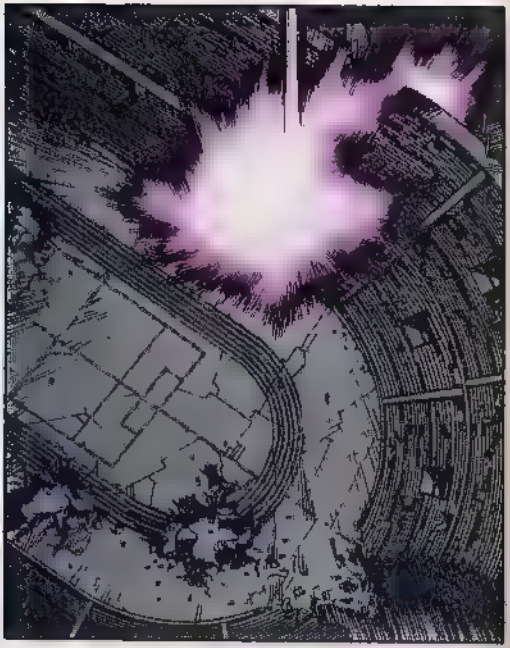
RRUMBLE RRUMMBLE
HUFF
HUFF

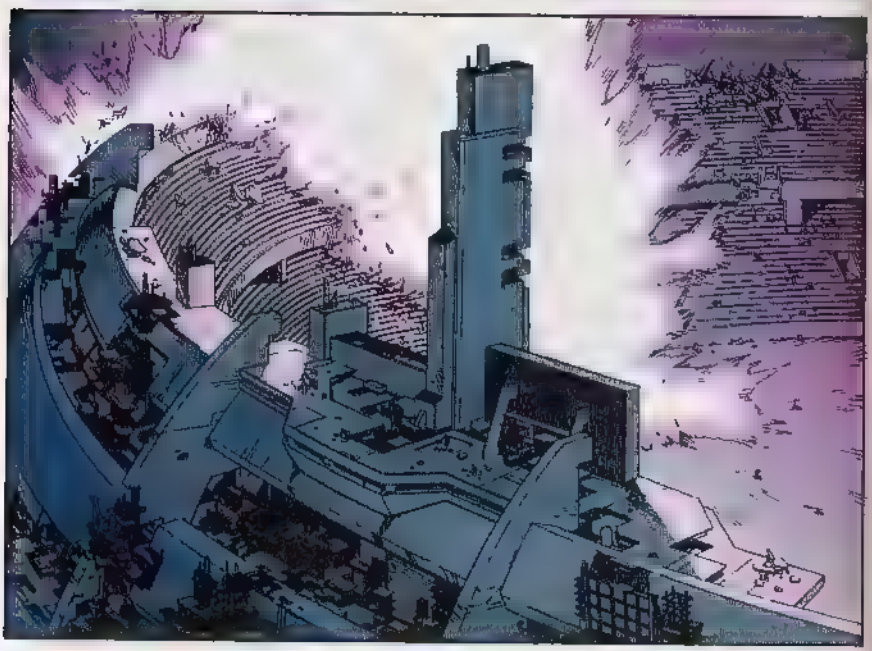
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
TAK
HUFF
HUFF

SWUP
NUMBER 41!
AT LAST!
LOOK..
I GOT MY ARM BACK

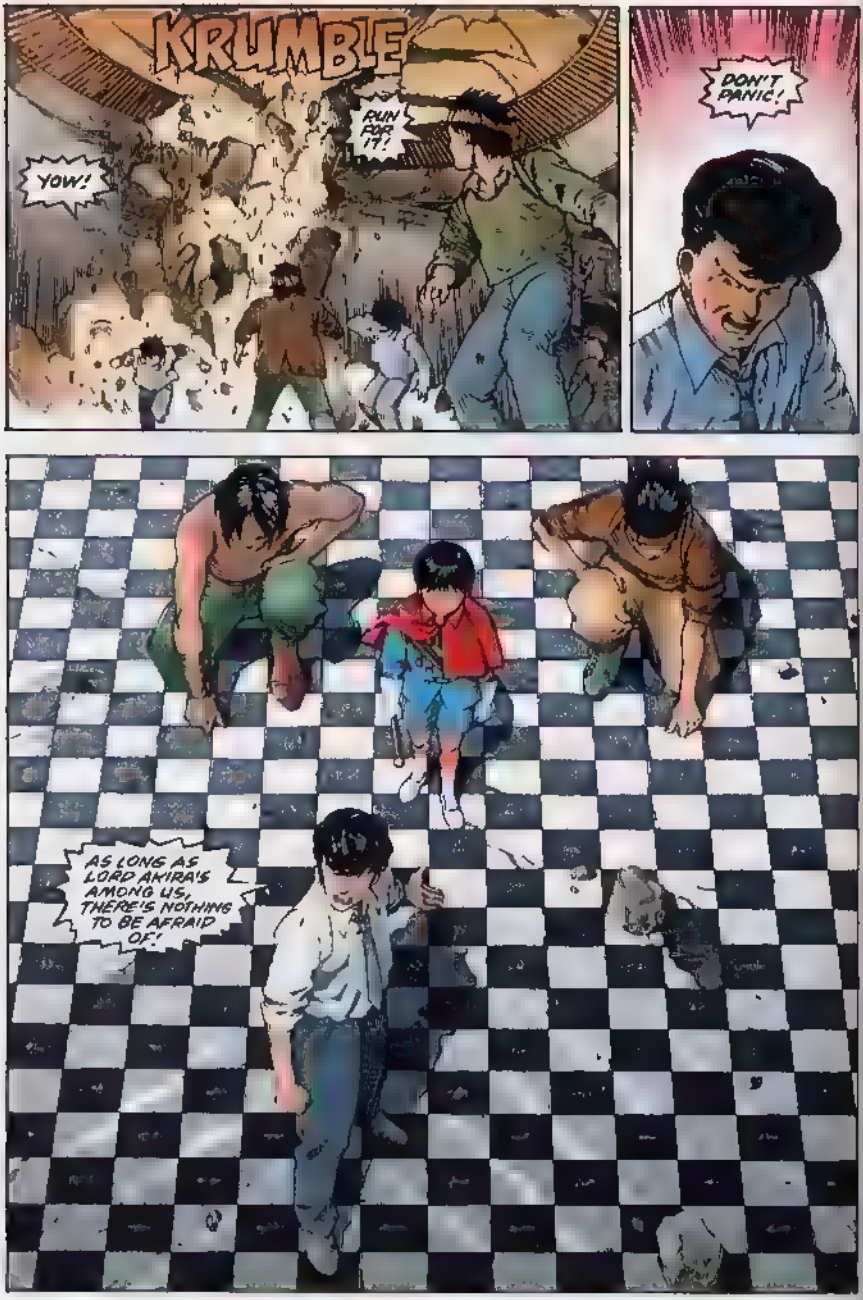

MY OWN HAND..
Veeep
SOL
740

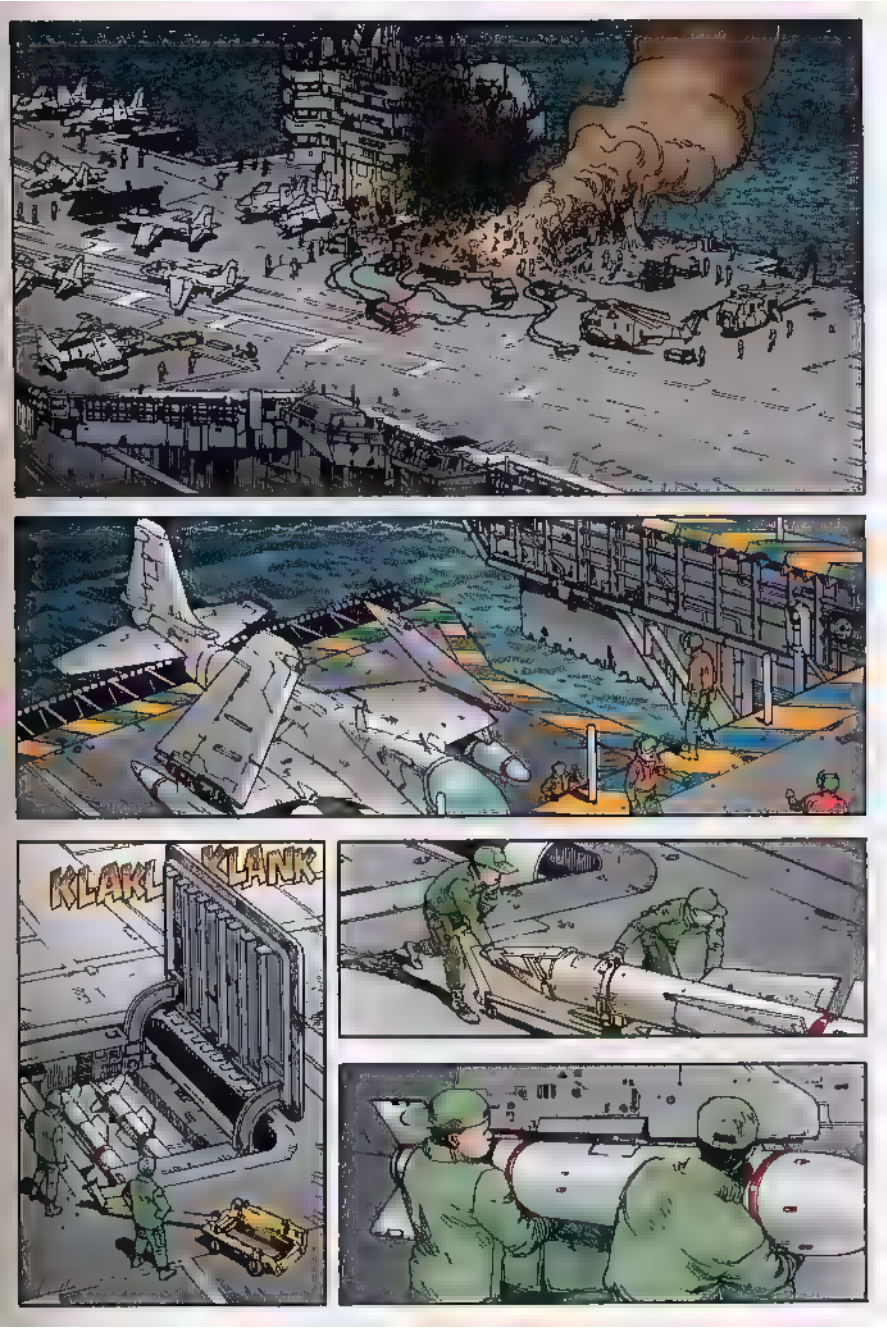


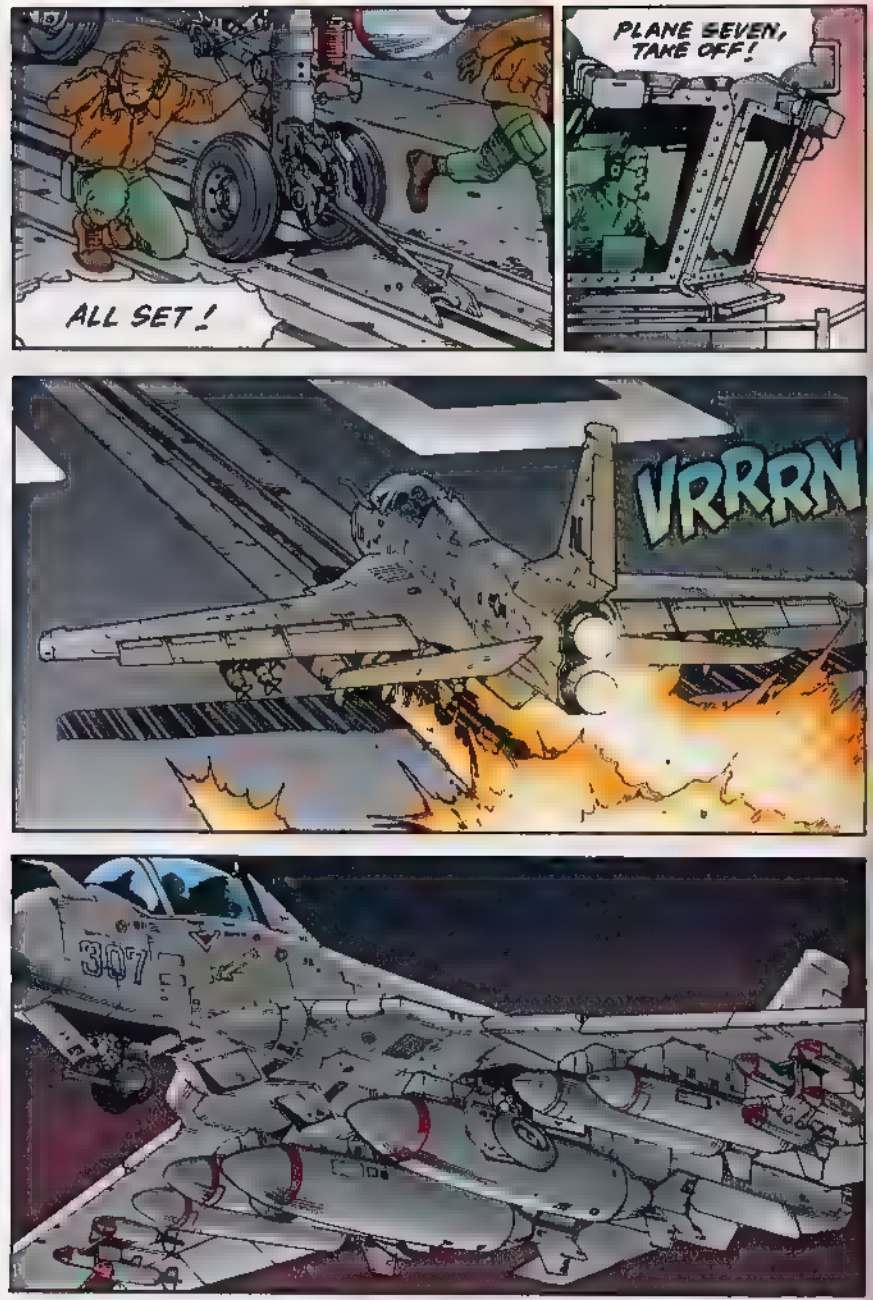


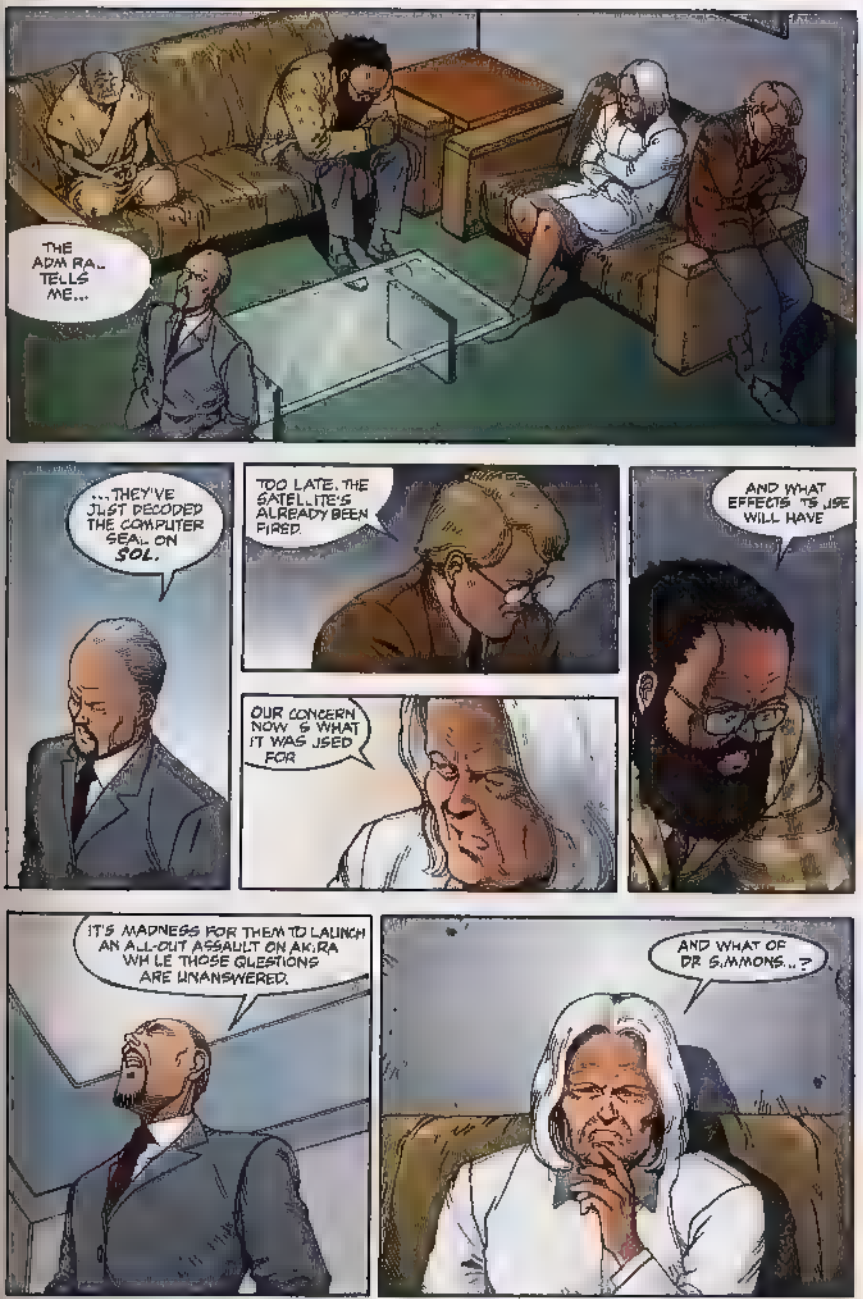


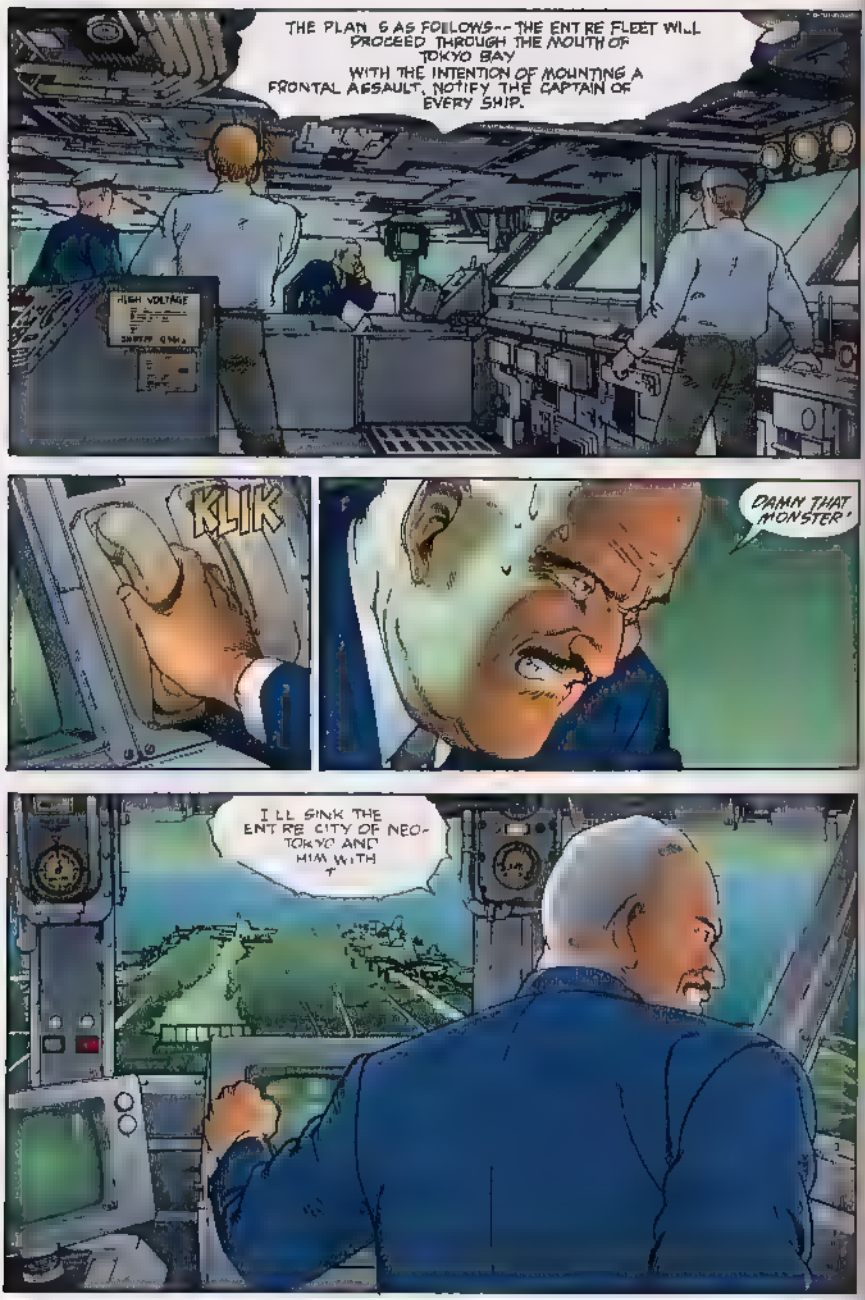
WAAUGH!
YAAAAH!


KRUMBLE
YOW!
RUN FOR IT!
DON'T PANIC!
AS LONG AS LORD AKIRA'S AMONG US, THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF!


KLAK!
KLANK


ALL SET!
PLANE SEVEN, TAKE OFF!
VRRRN
307


THE ADMIRAL TELLS ME...
...THEY'VE JUST DECODED THE COMPUTER SEAL ON SOL.
TOO LATE. THE SATELLITE'S ALREADY BEEN FIRED.
AND WHAT EFFECTS TSUNAMI WILL HAVE
OUR CONCERN NOW IS WHAT IT WAS USED FOR
IT'S MADNESS FOR THEM TO LAUNCH AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT ON AKIRA WHILE THOSE QUESTIONS ARE UNANSWERED.
AND WHAT OF DR SIMMONS..?


THE PLAN IS AS FOLLOWS-- THE ENTIRE FLEET WILL PROCEED THROUGH THE MOUTH OF TOKYO BAY
WITH THE INTENTION OF MOUNTING A FRONTAL ASSAULT. NOTIFY THE CAPTAIN OF EVERY SHIP.
HIGH VOLTAGE
KLIK
DAMN THAT MONSTER!
I'LL SINK THE ENTIRE CITY OF NEO-TOKYO AND HIM WITH IT

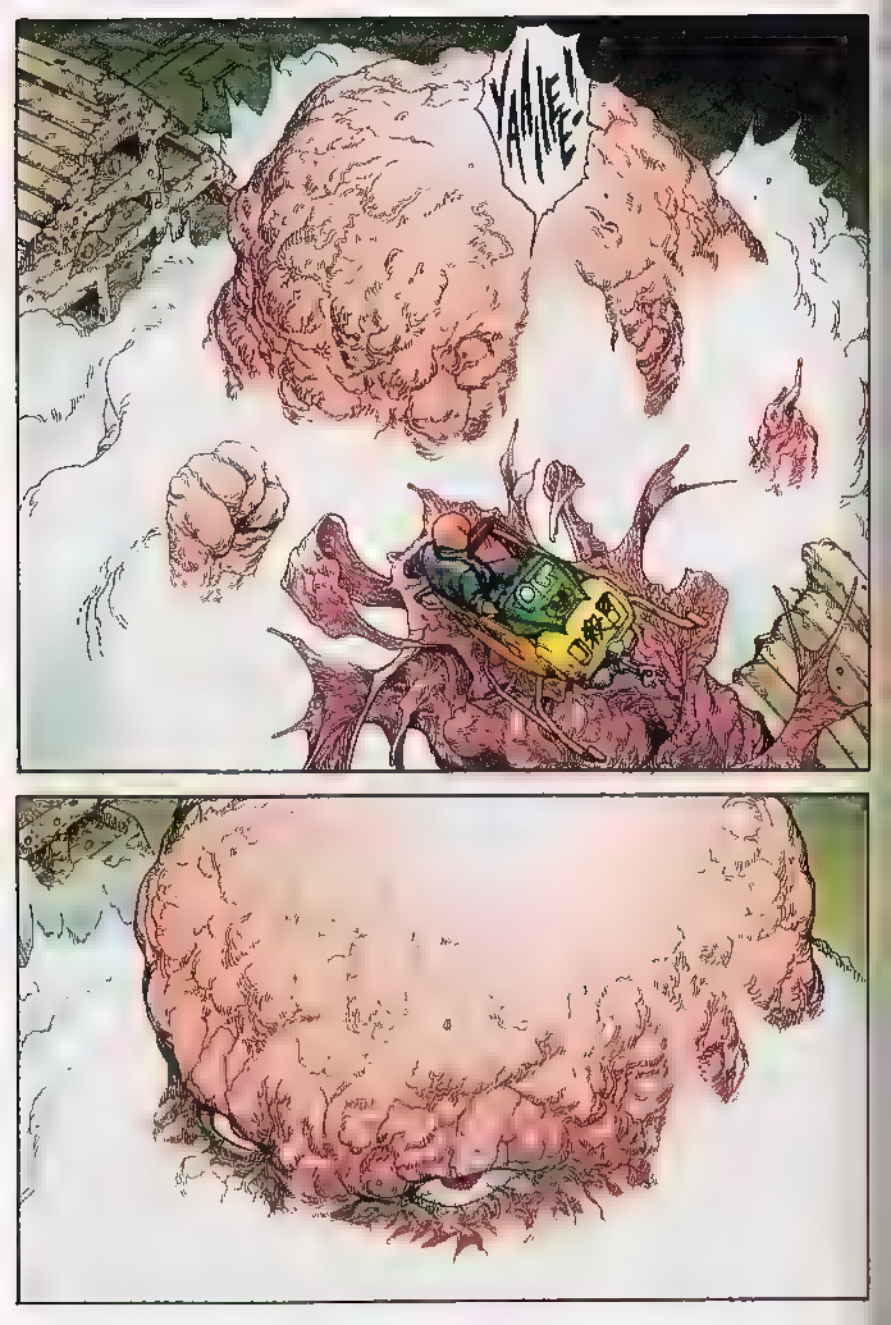
Vroooooooom
KANEDA!! GUYS!!

SOUNDED LIKE SOME FOOL JUST FIRED OFF THAT SATELLITE THING AGAIN...
HUNH?!
WHOZZAT?!

VIIIIIIIIII
!
TETSHOOO.!
TOKKATOKKA

VIIIIIIIIIIIII
GLORP

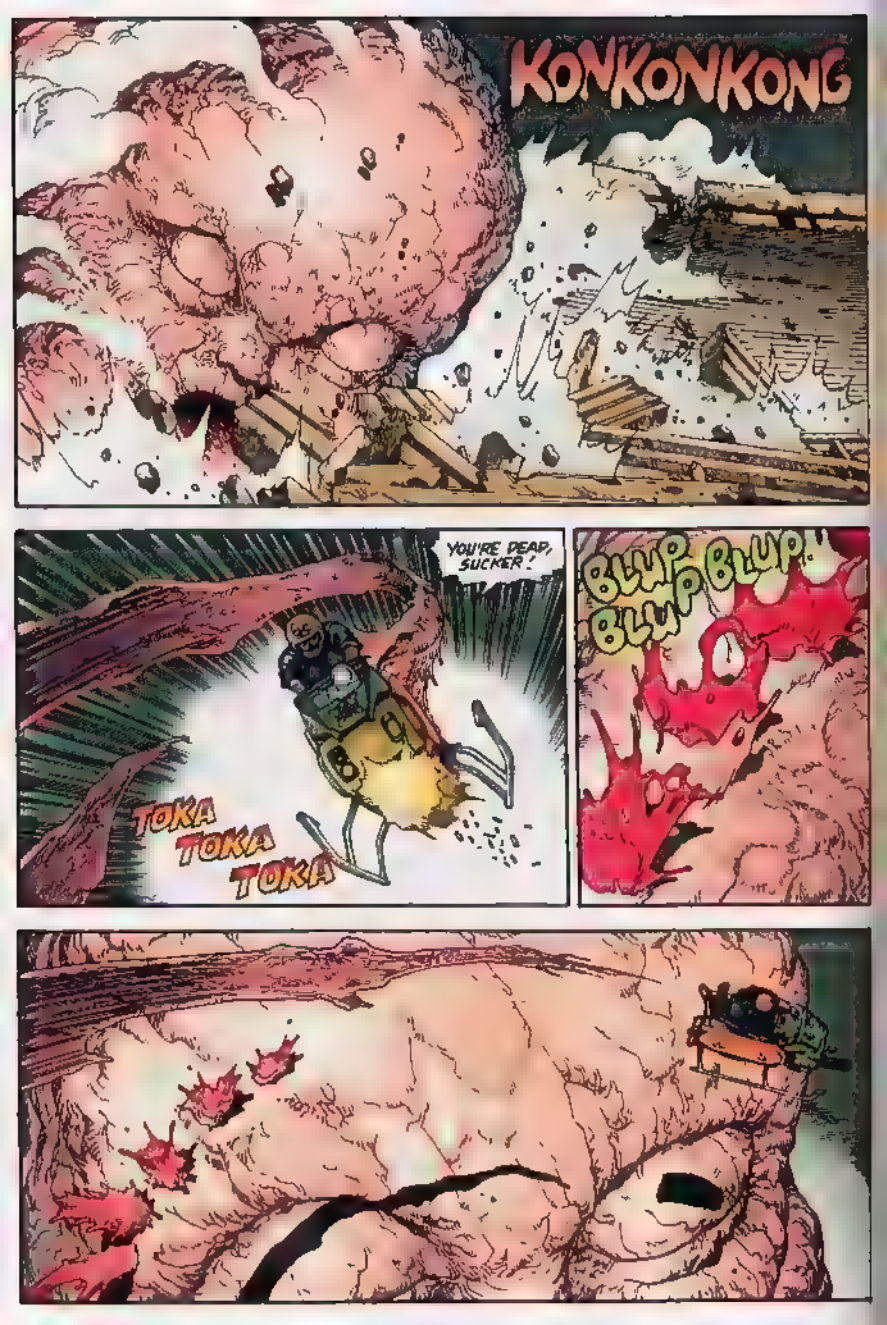
WHAT?!
SHP
SLUP
!
HMM?!


YAHHE!

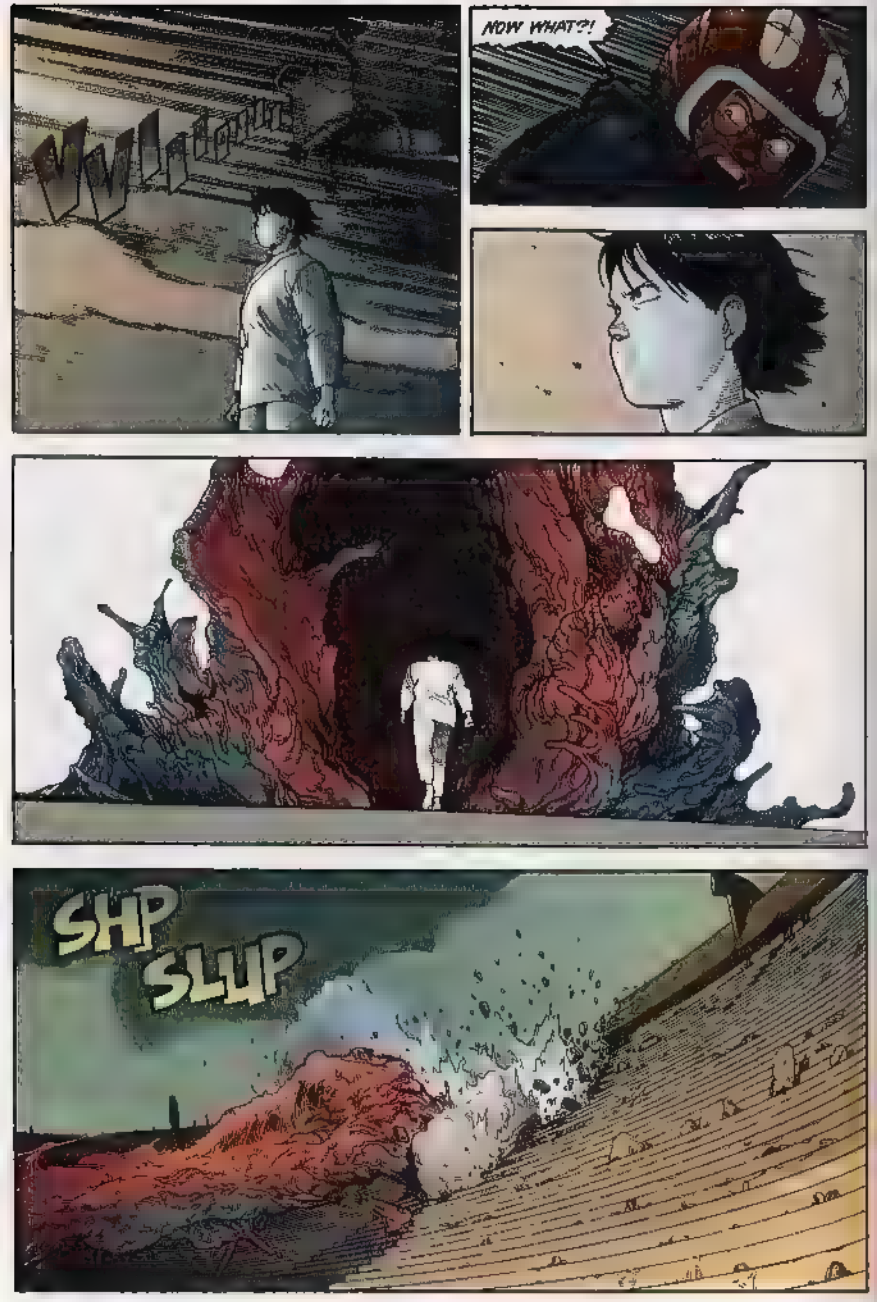
YUCK! DAMN IT, LET GO A' ME!
BLAST YOU!
vVOOO
TAKE THIS!
ffut
WHAT?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

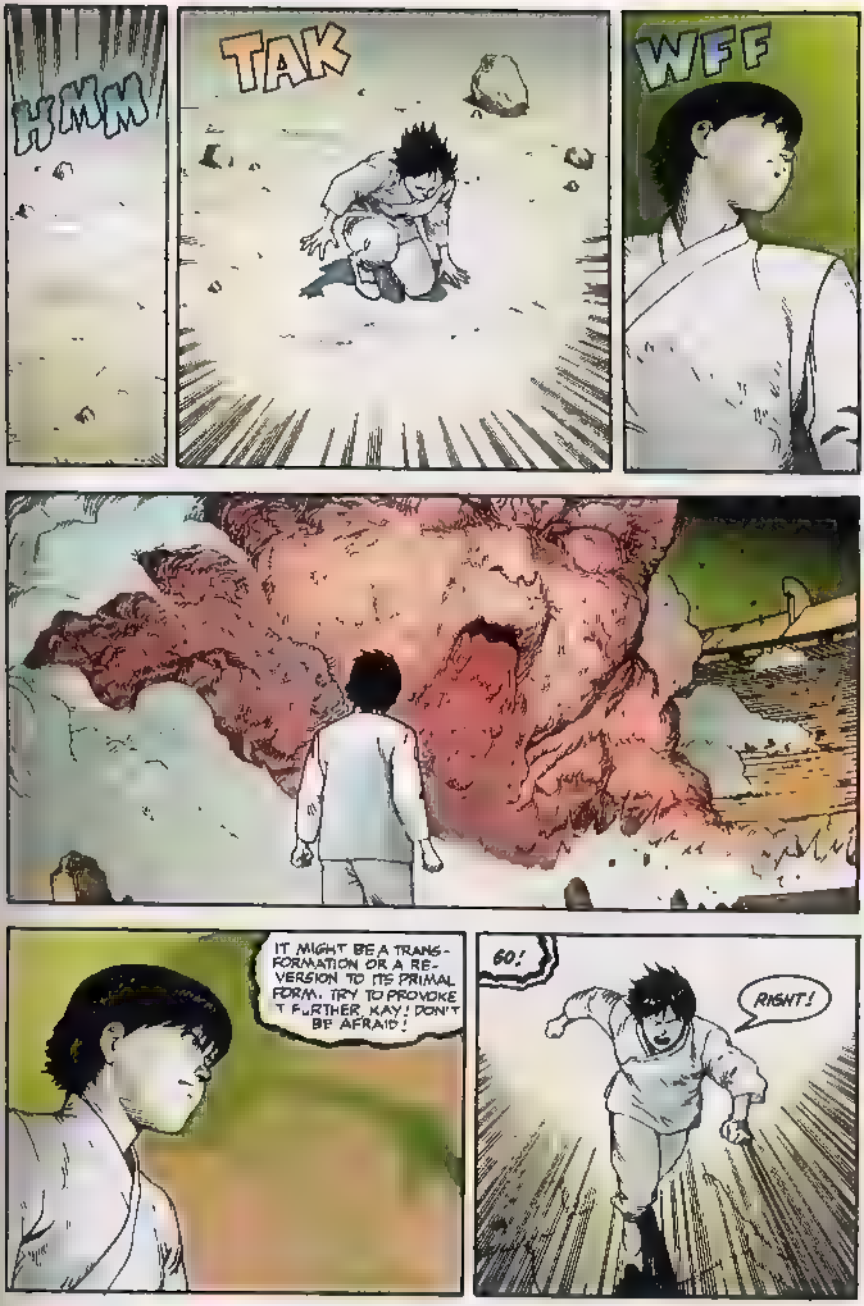
NGHO!
VIIIIIIII

. . ..
POK
MJH?
HEYY!
RRUNK
KKRRUMBLE

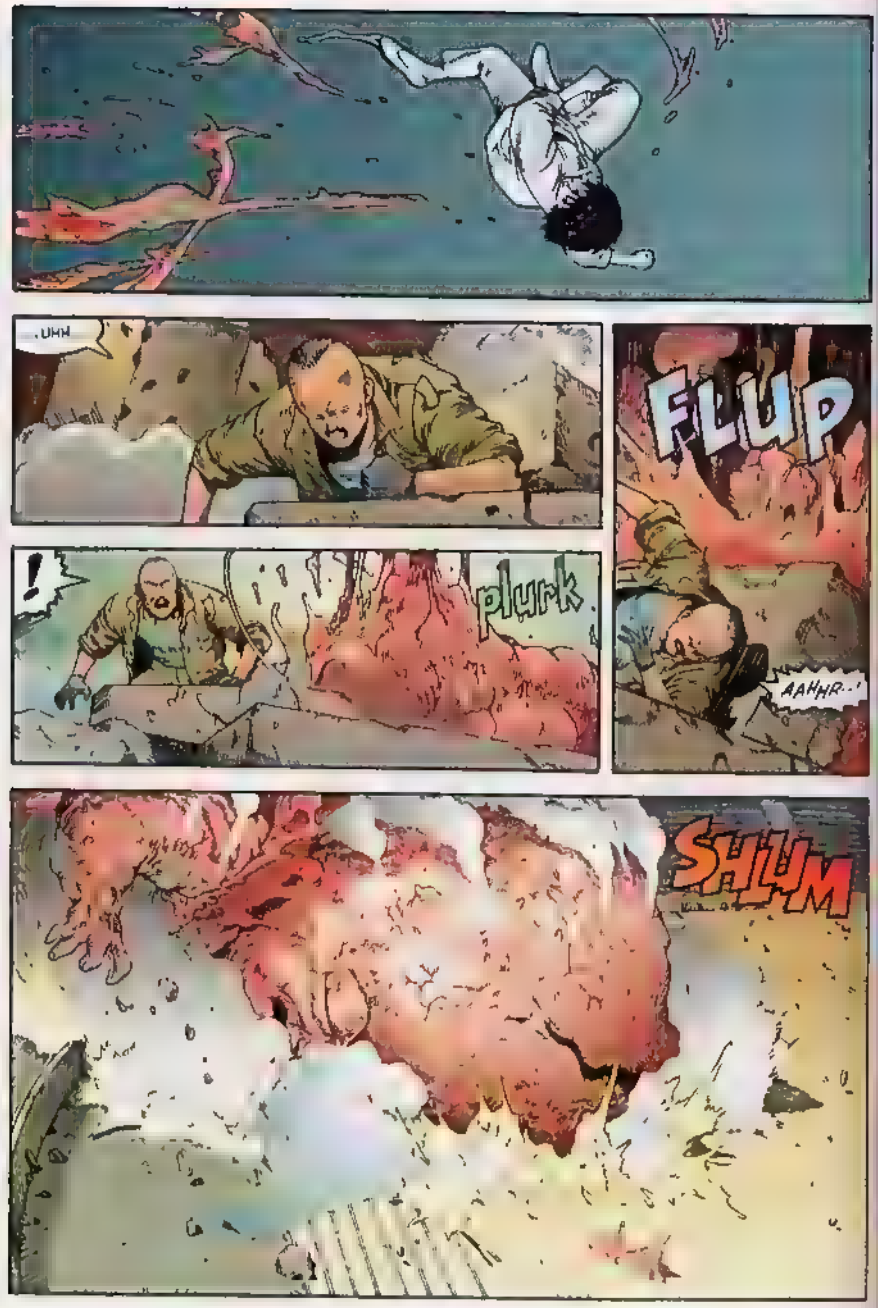

KONKONKONG
YOU'RE DEAD, SUCKER!
TOKA TOKA TOKA
BLUP BLUP BLUP

DID I GET HIM?
!
SHIT!


NOW WHAT?!
SHP
SLUP

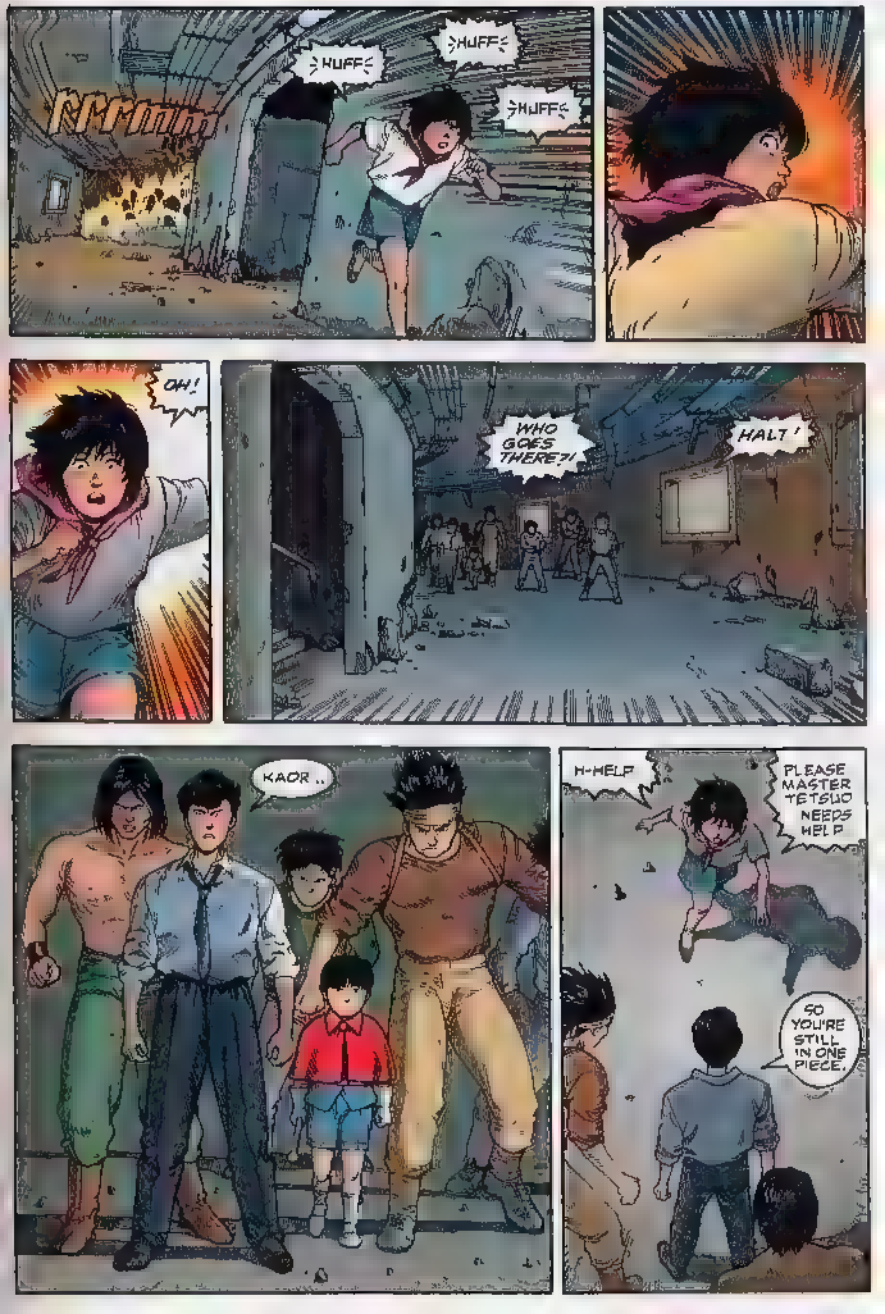

HMM
TAK
WFF
IT MIGHT BE A TRANSFORMATION OR A REVERSION TO ITS PRIMAL FORM. TRY TO PROVOKE IT FURTHER, KAY! DON'T BE AFRAID!
GO!
RIGHT!

GLISH
GLORP
WA WA WAAAAAAA!!


.UHH
FLUP
!
plurk
AAHHR..!
SHLUM

TAK
SLUP
GASP!

POK
GUP
OH--!
EEK!
SHHUK


RRRRRR
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
OH!
WHO GOES THERE?!
HALT!
KAOR..
H-HELP
PLEASE MASTER TETSUO NEEDS HELP
SO YOU'RE STILL IN ONE PIECE.

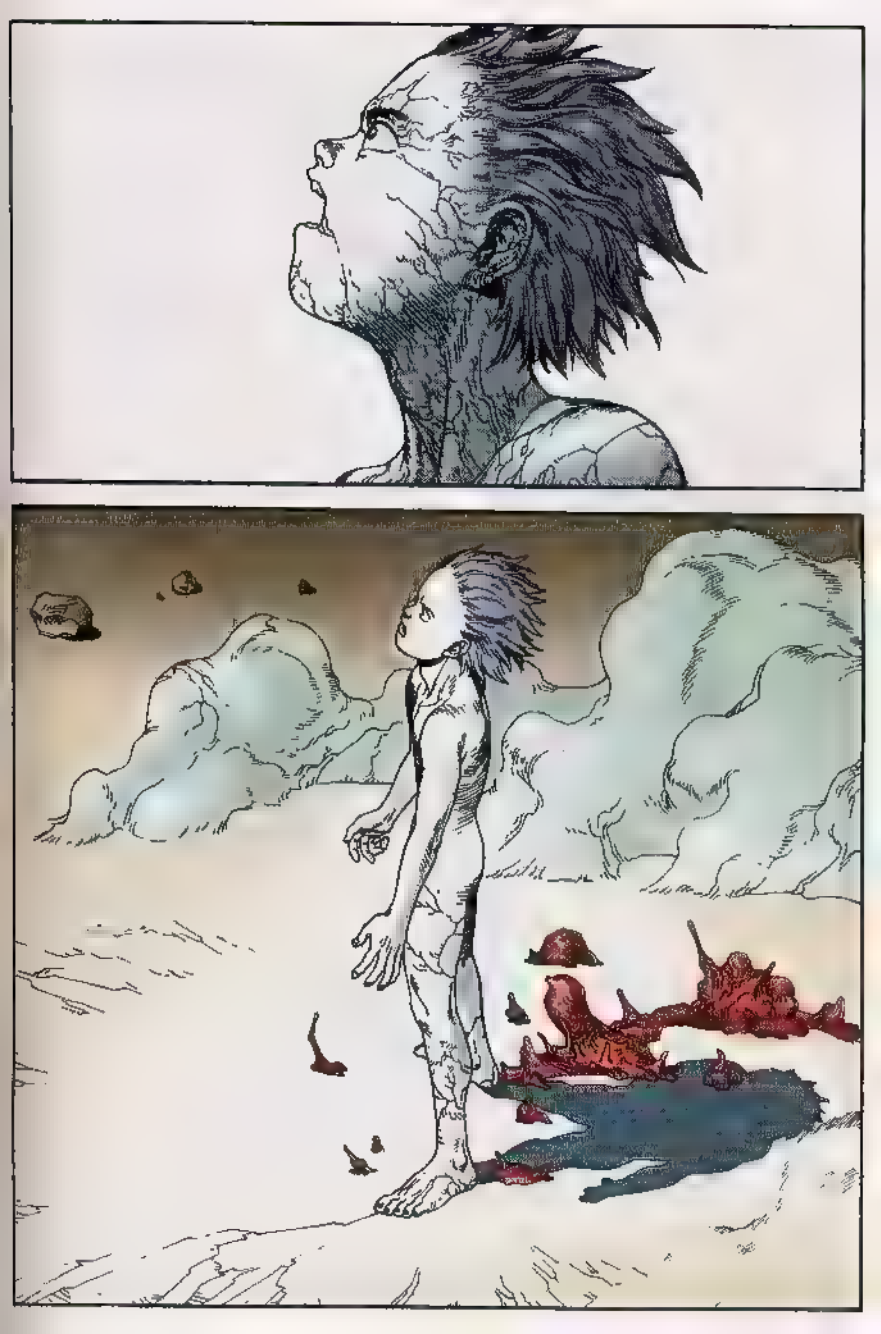
IT'S HIS BODY... SUDDENLY, IT BEGAN TO--!
IN BACK OF THE STADIUM. HE MAY HAVE BEEN TRAPPED WHEN THE WALLS AND CEILING COLLAPSED!
WHERE IS HE NOW?
JUST LIKE I FIGURED...
HE LET YOU LIVE.
SPEAKING OF BODIES, WHAT'D YOU DO...? BUY HIM OFF WITH YOURS?
NO! I WOULD NEVER--!
YOU HEARD HER.
HE'S SOMEWHERE CLOSE. YOU BETTER GET READY.
KLIK
KLAK
KLAK

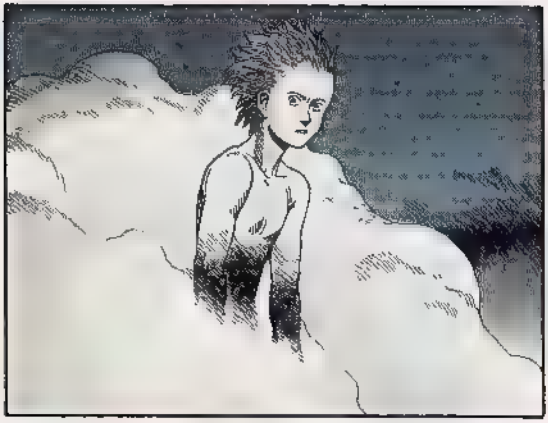
LORD AKIRA WILL LEAD THE ASSAULT. WHEN HE'S IN POSITION, YOU TWO USE YOUR POWERS TO ATTACK THE MONSTER. YOU GOT THAT?
WHEN THEY'VE DISTRACTED HIM, YOU GUNNERS OPEN FIRE.
HERE'S YOUR TARGET. AIM FOR HIS HEAD.
tap
A DIRECT HIT THERE WILL KILL TETSUO NO MATTER HOW STRONG HE IS.
WHAT?!
BUT THAT'S...
YOU CAN'T JUST KILL HIM!!
DON'T BE STUPID! WE'VE GOT TO GET HIM--
--OR HE'LL GET US!!

LET'S MOVE OUT!
RIGHT!
YOU CAN'T...
WE'LL USE THE KIDS AS A SHIELD...
... IF WE HAVE TO
DEPENDS ON HOW THINGS GO.
TAK
TAKTAKTAKTAK
HMM?
MASTER TETSUOOOO...

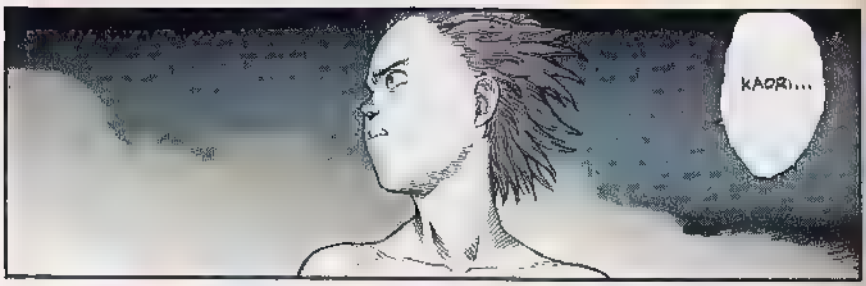
THAT BITCH.
SEX HAS PROBABLY GIVEN HER A HOLD ON H M....BUT...
BLAM

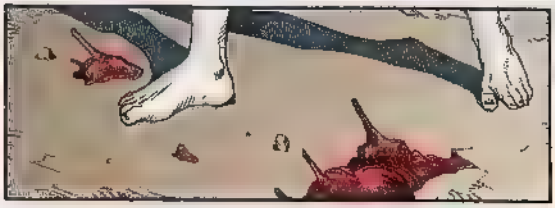
GASP!
NUMBER 41!

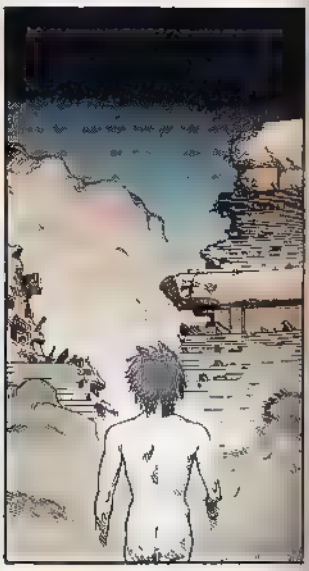


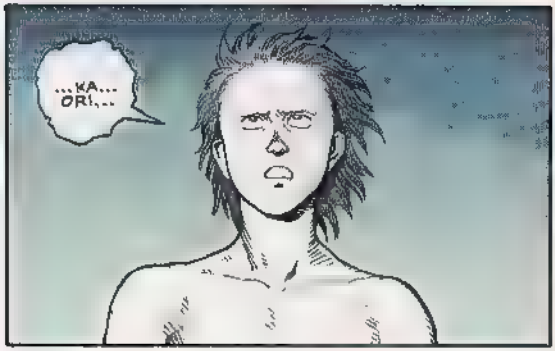


GUH


KAORI...

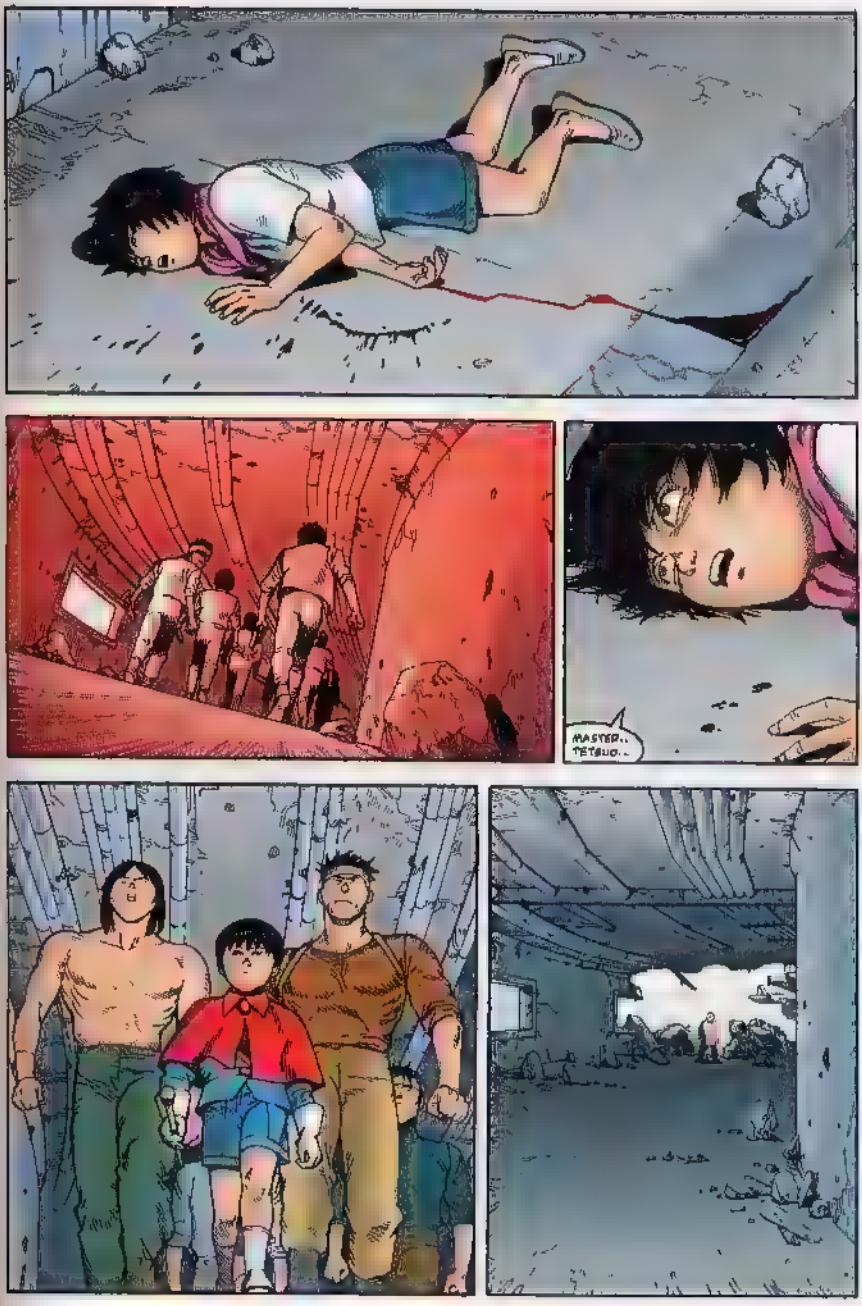





...KA...
ORI...

..OOH...
SHIT.
..OOH..
DAMN ! WE LOST THE VULCAN CANNON
..OW..!
LEMME SEE NOW.
DRRRN
ALL RIGHT!

KRUMBLE
LET'S GO
GO WHERE?
ONLY WAY WE CAN GO
DRRRRN
TOM
HEY, TETSUO! READY OR NOT, HERE WE COME!
RRRRN


MASTER..
TETSUO..

AN AMERICAN!
HUHH?!
HOLD YOUR FIRE!
DON'T SHOOT!
THE KID WHO'S LEADING THEM IS AKIRA!

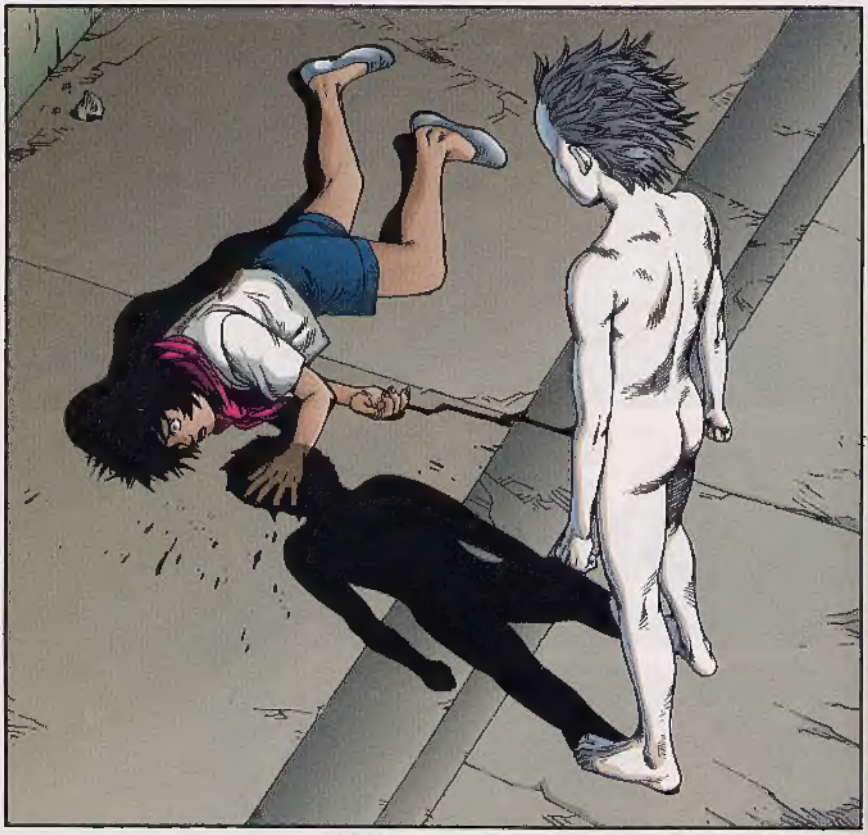
FIRE!
SHIT!
BUDDA BUDDA
BUDDA
BRING REINFORCEMENTS!
POK
SHUK
GET EVERYONE BUT AKIRA. YOU CAN BRING DOWN THE OTHER PSYCHICS WITH CONTAINED-FIELD BIOCHEM WEAPONS!

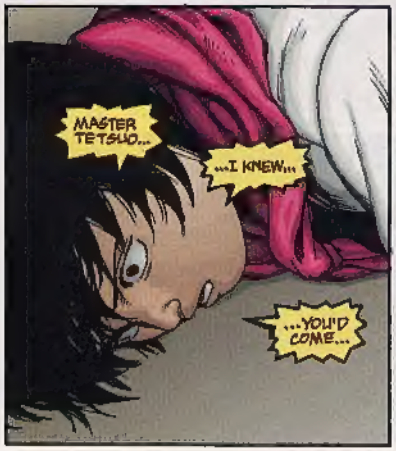
THEY AREN'T RETURNING P.RE
GO FIND OUT WHAT THEY'RE UP TO.
SHF
OOUAAH!
HRRGN!
PWOK
YAGH!
OOUUUUH!

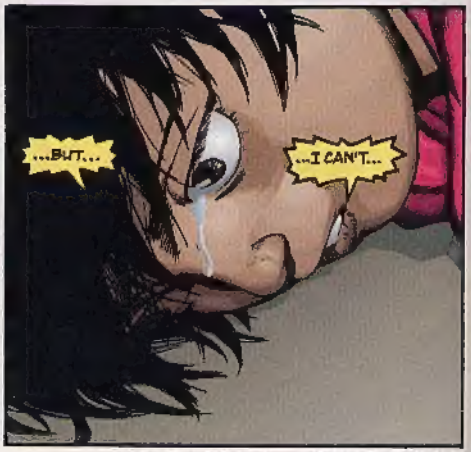
HRRGN!
TAK
POW
GNNN!
FWOM
AUGHK!
BANG
EH?

A LITTLE THING LIKE THIS? YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
HUNH?
ptik
UUHH
AAA...AAA...
WHA--
WHAT'S WRONG?
THUD

HUFF
PUFF
HE'S DEAD!
WHAT'D THEY USE ON HIM?!
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
DAMN! THEY'RE RUNNING!
COVER ME!
BLAM BLAM
KEEP FIRING!
TOKATOK
WE'VE GOT TO BRING ALL OUR FORCES TOGETHER IN ONE SPOT WITH LORD AKIRA AT THE CENTER!







NEXT ISSUE: **ARMS RACE**

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Epic Comics

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Primal forces compete in Neo-Tokyo's Olympic stadium, raw genesis and ragged apocalypse vying for the devotion of a city's survivors and the attention of the entire world. Creation's champion is the anguished Tetsuo, flesh betraying his humanity to unnatural transformation and transcendence. Destruction's heroes range from the manic Kaneda and Kai, toy soldiers atop stolen war mlachines . . . to dire American troops, men fearful as boys in attacking the mighty Akira . . . to the grim Colonel, unleashing heavenly power in a reckless attempt to reclaim his old world from the new one he's helped set loose.

Choose your side. . .as if there are any winners in this deadly game.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

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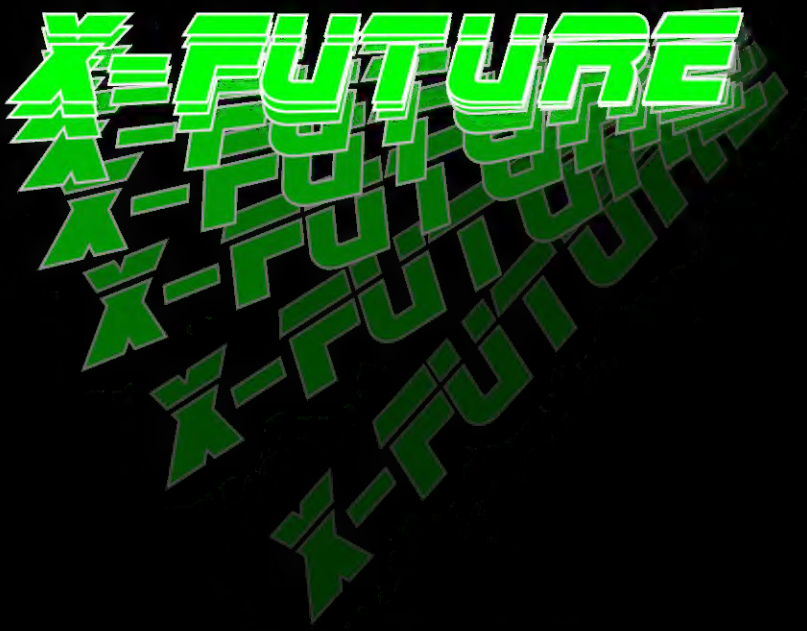

I love um

I buy um

I preserve um